POLITICAL EXCLUSION, DEMOCRATIZATION AND DYNAMICS OF ETHNICITY IN NIGER

Postcolonial Africa has been characterized by the authoritarian exclusion of large segments of society from participation in the political process. According to Nelson Kasfir de-participation is the most striking feature of political change since independence.[1] The political arena shrank as African states actively promoted de-participation by "strengthening the central administration" and assuring the "desuetude of participatory structures." The process of democratization that accompanied independence was therefore halted and reversed. At the structural level, the development of authoritarianism was rooted in a process that Peter Anyang-Nyong'o characterized as the disintegration of the national coalitions that brought African countries to independence.[2] Sociologically, this process involved the incorporation of "kith and kin" into ruling oligarchies and the exclusion of other groups from enjoying the prerogatives of power. This generated problems of ethnicity, clanism, regionalism, religious bigotry, etc. Elaborate programs of successive political exclusion were implemented and the vast majority of Africans lost their individual and collective rights to full participation in the political, civil, and economic lives of their countries.[3]

African political systems became increasingly characterized by the narrowing of the social and national base of the "President's men," and an expansion of the groups and segments of society that are excluded from the political process and significantly marginalized. The most affected groups have been women, the youth, ethnic and religious minorities (which could include marginalised ethnic and religious numerical majorities), and lurepen elements, products of ever deepening economic and ecological crises. It was in this context that the wave of democratization started sweeping across Africa in the late 1980s as a "corrective political tendency" of the African people, determined to integrate or re-integrate themselves into the political process of their countries.

The Republic of Niger is an interesting case study of the process of political exclusion, ethnicity and the demands for popular participation for a number of reasons. First, very little has been written about the contemporary political history of Niger, partly because the country's ruling oligarchy has been able to significantly minimize teaching, research, publication and even discussion of the subject for over thirty years.[4] There is virtually no study of ethnicity in Niger. Second, the country's leadership has been in the forefront of promoting the idea that strong authoritarian regimes are necessary for the preservation of national unity and for the promotion of economic development until this ideology collapsed in 198990. Third, Niger has developed one of the most elaborate systems of political exclusion in Africa and it is useful to outline its nature. Finally, since 1987, Niger has experienced a number of distinct "transitions to democracy" which pose interesting questions on the interface between ethnicity and democracy.

Ethnicity and Political Power

Do ethnic groups exist? In trying to answer this question, Cynthia Mahmoud proposes that group cognition rather than clusters of cultural traits are the most important because the reality of ethnicity is determined largely by in-and-out-group ethnic identification.s In an interesting study of the origins and spread of nationalism, Benedict Anderson argues that group imagination is the most important element in the constitution of national sentiments and identities:
All communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.[6]
Another aspect of ethnic identification is that groups might simultaneously identify themselves or be identified at different levels--local (sub-ethnic), cultural/linguistic (pan-ethnic) or regional levels.
In multi-ethnic states, ethnic communities have significant potential for political mobilization of their members. When this potential is realized, the stability of the

state could be threatened. There is a strong link between the democratic or authoritarian nature of regimes and the capacity of segments of society to increase their political participation through ethnic mobilization:

In a democratic multinational State, stability is usually maintained by means of political bargaining and compromise between ethnic subgroups whereas in authoritarian systems it is maintained principally through the elimination o.f subsystem political mobilization by coercion and by the regime's appeals to supra ethnic issues and policies?

Niger is an excellent illustration of this tendency. The country lived through a long period of authoritarian regimes that made it very difficult for ethnic perceptions of differences to be manifested politically. The transition from authoritarian to more democratic political forms provokes the decomposition and/or disarticulation of the coercive apparatus of the state and opens the possibility for ethnic mobilization and even conflagration.

Ethnic pluralism is in itself not a dangerous feature in multi-ethnic states. It is problematic when it becomes an object around which discrimination is perceived and interpreted in the cognition of groups.[8] Inter-ethnic conflicts tend to emerge at moments when groups perceive that they are being excluded from access to what they consider to be their rights, be they linguistic, economic, administrative, commercial, religious, etc. Therefore, the most important issue is the perception of domination by a group. Violent ethnic conflicts are usually linked to perceptions of group domination in the absence of channels for articulating demands.[9] The articulation of ethnic aggression however needs a relatively open or democratizing environment, and the concern for Niger is the possible effects of the country's democratic transition in exacerbating ethnic conflicts.

Niger, like most contemporary African countries, was constituted by (French) colonial authorities at the turn of this century. The process, according to Tidjani Alou, involved a long-term social project of transforming different communities, with different and sometimes contradictory historical trajectories into a new Nigerien national space in which all are subjected to the new center of power.

Initially, the capital of the colony was Zinder in the south central zone of the country, close to the Nigerian border. It was the capital from 1911 until it was moved to Niamey in the far west of the country in 1927.

The establishment of an educational infrastructure was one of the major instruments used in forging a new national space. Initially, schools were set up in military outposts to train interpreters, messengers, etc. The first regional school was established in Zinder in 1913 and the first set of students and teachers were recruited in that Hausa speaking region.[10] The decision to move the capital from Zinder to Niamey was a conscious political move aimed at preventing the evolution of a Hausa political elite that might be too closely allied to their cousins in northern Nigeria. The colonial authorities believed that building a Zarma/Songhat educated elite was easier to handle politically because they were culturally closer to the French controlled Songhai population in what are now known as Malt and Burkina Faso. In addition:

The French found it relatively easy to dominate the Zarma, whose stateless political structures and internal divisions made them particularly vulnerable to a strategy of "divide and rule." Zarma social structures in which at least two-thirds of the population were "slaves" or "captives," and French policies of emancipation assured that many low-status Zarma willingly worked for the French as servants, low-level administrators and soldiers. . . . The Hausa on the other hand, retained much of their customary state system and traditional values and were therefore considered "conservative" and resistant to "modern" change.[11]

The impressive study by Tidjani Alou shows that with the moving of the capital, Niamey became the center of production of the educated elite especially with the establishment of the first regional school there in 1930. It was the school from which students could go for higher education in the Ecole Normale William Ponty in Dakar. It was not an accident that the first graduates of William Ponty from Niger were all Zarma/Songhai and they became the first political leaders of the

country; their political importance closely following their seniority and year of graduation in Dakar.[12]

In pre-colonial Niger, identities were usually defined territorially and not on an ethnolinguistic basis. An early colonial survey by Abadie published in 1927 spelt out 39 ethnic groups.[13] Niger is composed of a number of communities that had constituted their macro and micro identities in the pre-colonial period.

The largest of these communities constituting about 53 percent of the population are the Hausa. They occupy the south central part of the country from Dogondouchi to Zinder and were organized in smaller political communities or states. The main states were Adar, Arewa, Konni, Gobir, Katsina and Tsotsebaki.

The Zarma and the Songhai speak the same language and are tied historically by their common appartenance to the Mall and Songhai empires. Nonetheless, they consider themselves to be two distinct peoples and since the collapse of the Songhai Empire, they have lived in numerous principalities in the western part of Niger. They constitute about 21 percent of the population.

The Fulani, both the exclusively nomadic Bororo and town Fulani, live in almost all parts of the Republic of Niger. Territorially, they were organized in many principalities, the largest being the Say theocracy and they form about 10 percent of the population.

The Tuaregs are also a nomadic group and they too constitute about 10 percent of the population and occupy the northern desertic fringes of the country. They had a number of centralized political communities such as the Air and Adar Sultanates and Damargu.

The Kanauris, about 5 percent of the population, occupy the far southeastern part of Niger. They are a constellation of different groups with the majority living around the Lake Chad area. They had a number of Kingdoms such as Kanen, Bornu and Damagaram.

The Guarmance constitute about 3 percent of the population. Other smaller groups include the Toubou, who like the Tuaregs are a desertic nomadic group

based in the Tibesti and have a strong warrior tradition, the Budumas, the Arabs, etc.

These ethnic categories constitute macro levels of identification in contemporary Niger. The real picture of ethnic identities is somehow more complicated than that:

Most observers agree that ethnicity is an important factor in contemporary Nigerien society, but, it is difficult to be precise about the country's ethnic identities. Fearing greater divisiveness, the government of Niger since independence has strongly discouraged research into ethnicity, and this type of classification is also difficult because the people of Niger use it so imprecisely to serve their own purposes. General ethnic groupings such as Hausa, Zarma or Beri-beri, mask a great deal of diversity because they group people whose origins and cultural practices can be quite varied.[14]

Even the most politically visible distinction--that between the Zarma and the Hausa---could become problematic in some instances. Mahamane Karimou's study of what he calls the "Mawri Zarmaphones" is an interesting example. The group in question is a sub-group of the Arawa (Sing. Ba'are), a Hausa speaking group. They are called Mawri by the Zarma, in reference to the two parallel ethnic marks they carry from ear to mouth. Karimou's study of their oral traditions shows that they believe that their origins are Kanuri before they migrated west and settled among the Zarma.[15] The impetus for their change of identity was material; they sought protection from attacks from Tuareg and Zarma groups by integrating into their neighboring communities. They however maintained their Arawa institutions and traditions. As one moves from Argungun in northwestern Nigeria through Dogonduchi to Niamey in Niger Republic, the "Arawa" group, also called Arawa by the Hausa are increasingly being considered and considering themselves to be Hausa while a sub-group, the Zarmaphone Arawa, now consider themselves Mawri.[16]

Another interesting example is that of the people of Damagaram. The inhabitants of the "Birni," the ancient city, are of Kanuri origin while the "Zango," the new

town, was populated by mainly black Tuareg settlers. The capital of Damagaram, Zinder, was surrounded by the Tsotsebaki Hausa states and within a short while, the people of Damagaram had been completely Hausanized. In fact, over the past 30 years, Zinder has become politically notorious as the center of divisive Hausa nationalism in Niger. Similar cases are the Kurtey, a Fulani group that was transformed to a Songhai speaking group and Inghall, a Tuareg group that is torn between Songhal and Tamashek languages and cultures.

The ethnic problem in Niger is linked essentially to the association that has been made in the public mind between the Zarma/Songhai ethnic group with the monopoly of political power, and the Hausa ethnic group with control of commerce and the smuggling network with Nigeria. The origins of Zarma/Songhai political control, as stated earlier, are linked to the history of colonial elite formation which favored it. The problem deepened after independence because the Zarma power elite developed a highly authoritarian system that virtually excluded all others from joining the summit of the political hierarchy. The origin of the control of smuggling and commerce by the Hausa is related to geographical proximity created by the over 1,000 kilometer boundary that separates Niger from Nigeria; and the consequent rise of Maradi as the major commercial town in Niger, following colonial pacification and the decline of the commercial status of Zinder in the wake of the destruction of the Trans-Saharan trade.[17]

Authoritarianism and Exclusion

The Republic of Niger became independent on the third of August, 1960. By that time, the democratic experiment that had been initiated in French West Africa following the installation of the Fourth Republic in Paris had already ended for the people of Niger. In the two years preceding independence, rival political parties had been outlawed, trade unions had been disbanded and an all-powerful President, Hamani Diori, had been installed in power. According to a constitutional chronicler of Niger, Jean-Jacques Raynal, the Constitution of the

First Republic invested virtually all the authority of the state in the hands of the President.[18] He had complete executive powers and was not accountable to Parliament. He had powers for ministerial appointments, without scrutiny by any other authority, as well as powers of appointments and terminations in the armed forces and in the civil service. He had the authority to veto parliamentary bills, (by perpetually suspending the second reading), and at the same time had the power to enact legislation by ordinance. In addition to these powers, he was also the Secretary-General of the ruling party and therefore controlled the party machine. There was no pretence of trying to practice a liberal democratic model.

Eliminating political parties and trade unions. The first stage of the construction of authoritarianism in post-colonial Niger involved the establishment of the single party regime that was able to eliminate rival parties and adversary trade unions. The party of President Hamani Diori, the Parti Progressiste Nigerien (PPN), was formed in June 1946 by a small group of evolues most of whom were from the Zarma ethnic group and had studied at the Dakar Teachers' College (Ecole Normale William Ponty).[19] The party was formed in response to the decision by the newly inaugurated French Fourth Republic to allow "natives" of the colonies the right to elect territorial representatives. The PPN affiliated with the regional political confederation, the Rassemblement Democratique Africain (RDA), when it was established in 1947. Politically, the PPN/RDA represented what A.D. Yahaya has described in the northern Nigerian case, as a counter-elite, a group of educated, young and ambitious Africans that were capable of taking over power from the two classic power elites in the colonial situation--the colonial administrators and their aristocratic allies, the traditional rulers.[20] True to type, the party campaigned against the coloinial administration and the chiefs but not against French rule as such. The PPN/RDA had two ideological wings with the right wing led by Hamani Diori and the left wing led by Djibo Bakary.[21]

The French administrators were alarmed at the growing activism of those they considered "communist agitators," and they mobilized chiefs and all the candidates who had lost the party nominations to Hamani Diori and Djibo Bakary

to form a conservative party, the Union Nigerienne des Independants et Sympathisants (UNIS) in June 1948. The UNIS candidate, Georges Condat, beat Djibo Bakary in the 1948 elections because of the support he received from chiefs and the colonial state. Hamani Diori also lost his seat in the 1952 territorial elections and the PPN/RDA was virtually wiped out of the colonial political scene. Djibo Bakary turned to active trade unionism and formed the Union des Syndicats Confederalistes du Niger, affiliated to the Confederation Generale du Travail (CGT) in France. He organized successful strikes in 1953-54 that led to salary increases for workers.[22] Bakary's more conservative cousin, Hamani Diori, followed the line set by Boigny and company of de-linking his branch of the RDA from the Communist Group in France and opting for "responsible politics." In 1954, the new colonial Governor, Jean Ramadier, realized that a party such as the UNIS that relied on the colonial administration and chiefs to win elections could not sustain political peace. He thus initiated a new policy of seeking "interlocuteurs valables," that is, politicians who represented real political forces. In line with this policy, the UNIS was abandoned and the PPN/RDA was rehabilitated.

In the same year, Djibo Bakary and Mamani Abdoulaye established a new party, the "Union Democratique Nigerienne" (UDN) as:

the political wing of the trade union movement and, of course, the UDN was anathema to the French administration for Governor Toby deemed it necessary to warn his administrators against the menace represented by this new ally of the communists.[23]

In spite of the administration, the party was able to generate wide popular support and won a majority of seats in the 1956 elections and Bakary became the mayor of Niamey. The following year, his partisans again won the majority of seats in the Territorial Assembly and Djibo Bakary became the de facto Prime Minister of Niger. During the 1958 Referendum in which French colonies were to decide whether they wanted to be self-governing but not independent members of the French Community, or wanted immediate independence, Djibo Bakary's

party, SAWABA, voted no to France and yes for independence. Bakary lost with only 24 percent voting no with him and 76 percent voting to remain in the French Community. That was the end of the colonial democratization project in Niger. Immediately after the referendum, Governor Colombani forced the SAWABA cabinet to resign and organized new elections that virtually "placed" the PPN and its leader, Hamani Diori, in power. In places where SAWABA candidates had won, such as Tessawa and Zinder, the elections were cancelled and, instead of organizing new ones, the seats were simply given to defeated PPN candidates.[24] The SAWABA party was outlawed in 1959 and its leadership sent to prison or into exile. The same fate awaited the radical trade union movement affiliated to it. The level of oppression against the "sawabists" was extremely high. Soulay Adji recounts, for example, how SAWABA militants had RDA branded on their backs with a red hot iron. One of the most scandalous aspects of this oppression was that citizens were forced to participate in the witch-hunting exercise, especially after one of the PPN/RDA barons, Abdou Gao, executed his own son for being a member of SAWABA.[25] Adji adds that punishment was meted not only to those who had SAWABA party cards but also to those who did not have PPN/RDA party cards in the 1958-60 period.

At the political level, all other parties were forced to dissolve themselves and join the ruling party, the result being that, even before independence, Niger had become a de facto one party state. The leadership of the other parties were, however, never integrated into the top hierarchy of the party or the state and the core group that formed the politburo of the PPN in 1956 remained the barons of the party until the coup d'etat of 1974. The only option for political participation left open became that of armed struggle which SAWABA took with its call for insurrection in September 1964. A few militants trained in Algeria and Vietnam were smuggled back into Niger and some attempts at insurrection were made in the Zinder, Maradi and Diffa areas. In addition, a SAWABA militant, Ahmadu Diop, threw a grenade at Hamani Diori on 13 April 1965, during the Friday prayers, and one person was killed. These amateurish attempts at armed

struggle provided excuses for the state to institute full-scale state terrorism against all suspected SAWABA supporters. The gendarmerie was given full freedom to contain the revolt and they used their weapons in a very devastating manner. Whole villages of SAWABA sympathizers were reported to have been wiped out secretly. At the public level, a major political tribunal to try the sawabists sat in May 1965 and 5 persons were sentenced to death and 46 imprisoned.[26] All political forces in the country except the barons of the PPN/RDA had been eliminated from the political scene and an authoritarian political system put in place. The authoritarianism however had a peculiar ethnic character as virtually all power wielders were from the same Zarma/Songhai ethno-regional base of western Niger.

The Consolidation of an Ethnically Based Oligarchy. One of the specificities of the French colonization of Niger was that, from the very beginning, the French favored the Zarma/Songhai in the west over other ethnic groups in the east and north regions. The Zarma/Songhai, about 20 percent of the population, comprised the educated elite and controlled political power until the National Conference in 1991. Among the founders of the PPN, there were no Hausa, Kanuri, Fulani, Toubou or Tuareg participants. This situation did not change and, over an 18-year period (1956-74), no non-westerner was admitted into the 12-member politburo of the party. From 1956 to 1990, the top two office-holders were always Zarma/Songhai: Hamani Diori and Boubou Hama; Seyni Kountche and Sani Sido; Seyni Kountche and Ali Saibou; Ali Saibou and Ahmadou Maiga. According to Soulay Adji, in terms of political control, the only contest in Niger politics in 30 years has been between aristocrats and commoners of the Zarma/Songhai group while the elites of the other ethnic groups have been uneasy onlookers.[27] He adds that even in the army, the Zarma/Songhai comprised at least 70 percent of the officer corps. This ethnic control had repercussions on the distribution of national resources. The survey carried out by Adji in 1990 revealed that 62.7 percent of development projects were in Zarma/Songhai areas and only 22.7 percent in Hausa areas.[28] The conclusions

of Finn Fugelstad, the chronicler of Niger's political history, are unambiguous in this regard:

Niger had fallen victim of the "sub-imperialism" of the Zerma/Songhay and the nascent political awakening of the Hausa had been cut short. In a sense the Diori government pursued exactly the same policy as the French after 1922, that of trying to sterilize all political activity to silence the Voice of the average Nigerien.[29]

The PPN, as the party in power, was incapable of widening its power base and became the focus of nation-wide grievances.

The regime of Hamani Diori was overthrown on 14 April 1974 in a coup d'etat led by Lt. Col. Seyni Kountche. Neither the authoritarian nature of the regime nor its narrow ethno-regional base were at issue in provoking the change of government and both characteristics not only continued but were aggravated under the military regime. The major factor that seemed to have precipitated the change of regime was France's concern over Diori's attempt to make France pay more for uranium.[30] The military regime was extremely harsh and repressive with its own people. Soulay Adji explains that the coup was greeted with popular acclaim because people were fed up with the coercion of the PPN regime.[31] However, the new regime of Seyni Kountche soon installed a system of blind terrorism, starting with the top members of its own Supreme Military Council. In fact, the members of the council were never announced and, within a year, most of them had been killed or put in prison. On 4 August 1975, President Seyni Kountche made a radio broadcast in which he declared:

From today, the ship that is the Nigerien State has only one captain; I am the captain and I shall remain the captain.[32]

The military regime had turned into a one-man tyranny that only ended with his death in 1987. President Kountche turned the whole country into a virtual military cantonment with gendarmes controlling the movement and activities of people. In the capital, for instance, he employed 10,000 political police to control a population of only 400,000 people.[33] Niamey was under curfew from 6 pm each

night. People disappeared for having made a careless comment and silence became the watchword for survival. Only nomadic Tuaregs and students were able to put up some element of resistance to the State terrorism organized by Seyni Kountche.

Democratization, Elite Strategies and Ethnicity in the Transition

Repression tends to provoke different forms of resistance among the populations subjected to it. The forms of resistance differ depending on the groups involved and the period. We have already mentioned that the partisans of SAWABA, most of whom were in the Hausa-speaking zone in the southern part of the country, attempted an armed uprising against state authority and were defeated. After that, most groups in the country more or less accepted that it was suicidal to resist, and were therefore forced to withdraw from the political scene. In his thesis on the political sociology of Niger, Soulay Adji argues that persistent repression eventually led to a marginalization of the state itself as people withdrew from public life and re-focused their lives on their religions, cultures, and economic activity, while scrupulously trying to avoid state nuisance.[34]
The Second Republic: Failure of the First "Democratic" Transition. Niger's Second Republic was inaugurated on 6 October 1989, with the promulgation of a new constitution which had been widely approved (99.3 percent) in a referendum a month earlier. The process of returning to democratic rule was a long and elaborate one and was initiated on 3 August 1983, when President Seyni Kountche announced a program of gradual return to constitutional rule and grassroots democracy. The first stage was the drawing up of a National Charter that would define the operational principles of the future constitution as well as the instrument for democratization--the National Council for Development (CND). The objective of the CND was to dynamize and integrate neighborhood, village and ward associations, known as samariyya, into organs of democracy and development.[35] The first draft of the charter was circulated in April 1986 and adopted by the Council of Ministers in May 1987 after a national debate. It had

no provisions for the transfer of power to elected representatives but it proposed the establishment of the rule of law in the country.[36] The death of Seyni Kountche and his succession by Ali Saibou as Head of State in November 1987 accelerated the process of political change. On assuming power, he declared that he would pursue the process of democratization but would not accept multipartyism nor withdraw the military as an integral part of the state apparatus, so as to preserve stability and national integration.[37] He toured the country to sell the constitution and, significantly in the Hausa commercial town of Maradi, he warned that he could no longer tolerate rampant smuggling, and in Zinder, the center of Hausa political opposition, he warned that he would not compromise on national unity.[38]

President Saibou transformed the CND into a single party, the MNSD (National Movement for the Development of Society). The constitution that was adopted and the elections that were held in 1989 were aimed at the institutionalization of the idea of single party democracy in the country.[39] The directing principle of the Second Republic was to "restore democracy while maintaining order."[40] Apart from these institutional changes, President Saibou also considerably mellowed the authoritarian grip of the state. He disbanded the political police and lifted the night curfew in major towns. He released over 100 political prisoners from detention (including Hamant Diori and Djibo Bakary) and allowed political exiles to return to the country.[41] He also initiated a policy of "decrispation" by making the regime less austere, more open and friendly. On 10 December 1989, Ali Saibou was elected President of the Republic with 99.6 percent of the vote and 93 members of the National Assembly were elected with 99.52 percent of the vote, all in a very orderly manner.[42]

Two months after the election of the President, on 8 February 1990, university students started a boycott of lectures over International Monetary Fund-inspired Structural Adjustment Policy measures that were pushing the state to start withdrawing from the educational sector, and the following day, they organized a peaceful march to town. As they got to the Kennedy bridge on the outskirts of the

capital, soldiers attacked them and at least 14 unarmed students were killed.[43] This massacre of students on Friday 9 February became a major turning point in Niger's history. It was a great shock to people that a government that claimed to be democratizing society could massacre unarmed students without provocation. Immediately after the massacre, the central labor organization, the Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs du Niger (USTN), was shocked out of 30 years of lethargy and collaboration with the government in power. It withdrew from the governing council of the MNSD and began to openly agitate against the MNSD state. It played a major role in organizing a massive demonstration the following Friday (16 February), after prayers at the mosque, which turned out to be the biggest protest march since independence. Souley Adji argues convincingly that the massacre on what has come to be known as Black Friday signaled the birth of civil society in Niger.[44] The slogans at the demonstration were a clear indication--"Down with Whisky" (in reference to Saibou's well-known drinking habit), "Down with the Second Republic," and "Down with the IMF." The fear of gendarmes that was so characteristic of francophone African culture was reversed and the people wanted to define their own democracy rather than accept the one proposed by the state.

With the birth of civil society, the edifice of repression collapsed. The state even started to lose its capacity for manipulation. The Minister of Internal Affairs was removed to calm the situation but people demanded more. The Council of Ministers was dissolved and a non-Zarma (Hausa) Prime Minister was appointed to serve under Saibou. A new Council of Ministers which, for the first time represented the country's ethnic diversity, was appointed but it was too late. Four months after Black Friday, Haske, the first independent newspaper since independence, was launched. From its first edition, it started a debate on the necessity for multipartyism and a National Conference. The trade unions moved from calling for respect for the Constitution to demanding its abrogation. In a speech on 20 July 1990, President Saibou appealed to the nation in the following terms:

We must not copy for the sake of copying. Multipartyism will come at its own time but not through street pressure or in confusion.[45]

It is a familiar refrain that has been repeated in many African countries over the past five years. However, nobody was ready to listen. From 5-9 November 1990, a general strike was organized in support of a National Conference and multiparty democracy, and an estimated 100,000 people marched on the streets of Niamey. It was the end of an era. The days of the Zarma/Songhai authoritarian oligarchy were apparently numbered. The people had imposed a linkage between democratization and popular multiparty participation. It is to Ali Saibou's credit that he accepted the people's verdict and agreed that a National Conference should be convened.

The National Conference: Popular Participation and Democratic Transition. The Republic of Benin initiated the practice of a National Conference aimed at resolving serious political and social problems in contemporary Africa. The Cotonou Conference of February 1990 brought together 488 delegates representing 52 political parties, professional organizations, religious groups, peasants, and women's groups, who declared its sovereignty from Kerekou's governmental authority and appointed a transitional Prime Minister charged with organizing a return to democratic civil rule. Since then, that strategy became politically infectious, especially in francophone Africa. The Benin example had a clear impact on the situation in Niger. The political demands that were made, the forms of representation that were adopted and the sovereign status of the conference followed the Benin example. Even Haske, the independent newspaper that led the call for a National Conference, was being printed in Benin.

The National Conference in Niger was declared open by President Saibou on 29 July 1991. It sat for four months and was composed of over 1,200 delegates representing trade unions, student's unions, 30 political parties, chambers of commerce, voluntary associations, and the civil service. As was the case in Benin, the National Conference ruled from the very beginning that its decisions

were sovereign and would override all pre-existing institutional powers. In fact, it dissolved the government and asked Director Generals of ministries to report directly to it, thus turning President All Saibou into a ceremonial Head of State. It even removed the Chief of Army from office. What was most striking about the National Conference was the spirit of liberty it fostered all over the country. The security forces were removed from the streets and confidence seemed to have returned to people. The National Conference generated very wide interest in politics and its proceedings (from 8 o'clock in the morning to 10 o'clock in the night, Monday through Saturday) were broadcast live on radio, and the whole nation was virtually glued to the radio.

The conference also became a forum for public complaints. Policemen in uniform, for example, came up to present evidence that the Director of Police had misappropriated fuel vouchers that were meant for public use while customs officials attended to explain how the "dictatorial leadership style" of their director had forced them to go on a national strike. Even the press developed very rapidly. After Haske, three other independent newspapers, published in French, emerged within months. These were: Le Republicain, Horizon 2000, and Express Nigerien. In addition, a Hausa language newspaper, Kakaki, was launched. The press openly discussed questions that had never been posed previously in public such as state repression, ethnicity and democracy. Only the official government newspaper, Le Sahel, seemed to have had problems of production at the time. The National Conference reversed the marginality of the population, and the will and determination for popular participation in politics became the order of the day. It was indeed a major cathartic moment that helped release the spirit of liberty lurking in Nigeriens.

Three issues attracted particularly intense and passionate debate during the National Conference. The first was the history of political crime in the country, from state-directed political assassination in the 1960s and 1970s, to the massacre of Tuaregs, especially the mass murder of Tuareg families by the gendarmerie in 1990, and of course the attack on students on 9 February 1990.

The Commission on Political Crimes and Abuses (La Commission Crimes et Abus Politiques) became the most controversial one in the National Conference as the result of vociferous demands to "punish the murderers," at the same time as legally binding proof of the alleged crimes was virtually impossible to establish.

The second issue was that of corruption. The vast majority of Niger's political and technocratic elite have evolved in a culture of widespread corruption that had never been previously questioned or punished because of the highly authoritarian nature of the state. Major revelations were made in the National Conference on various deals and the public was shocked at the extent of the "theft" of public resources in such a poor country. A tribunal was subsequently established to try the accused persons and recover the monies misappropriated.

The third issue that provoked intense debate was that of the economic and financial crises facing the country. From its inception, the National Conference was confronted by the fact that the state was virtually bankrupt. Officials of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were actually in attendance at the conference as observers, to explain that the only viable option for the country was their version of a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The conferees were unimpressed by the arguments of SAP and voted to reject it. They were, however, unable to develop a coherent alternative that could steer the country out of its dire economic condition. In fact, most of the issues raised in the National Conference were not resolved but the conference itself provided a valuable public forum in which for the first time, serious national issues were openly and honestly discussed, thus setting the agenda of issues that a democratic Niger would have to resolve in the next few years.

At the end of its deliberations on 29 October 1991, the National Conference established transitional institutions that would rule the country for 15 months, after which fully democratic elections would take place. The transitional institutions were: the Office of the President of The Republic, which would only have protocol functions, having been stripped of executive and legislative powers

by the National Conference; a "High Council of State," (HCR-Haut Conseil de la Republique) that had legislative powers as well as supervisory powers over the executive; and finally, the Prime Minister and his ministers, who had executive powers. General Ali Saibou remained as President of the Republic, Professor Andre Salifou, the President of the Presidium of the National Conference, was elected President of the HCR while Tcheffou Ahmadou was elected Prime Minister. All these elections were conducted in the National Conference which also decided that none of the three transition officers could contest future presidential elections.

The transitional institutions were considered the final phase of the National Conference and their main function was to lead the country to democratic rule. In fact, the National Conference did not succeed in drawing up a Constitution, only a "Fundamental Act" (Acte Fundamental no. 21 de 1991) which was to guide the transitional institutions in their tasks. The HCR adopted the new constitution on 30 September 1992 and Nigeriens accepted it in a referendum which took place on 26 December 1992. The Fundamental Act did not spell out the functions and prerogatives of the transitional institutions very clearly, resulting in many conflicts of interpretation and clashes of personality during the transition.

Notwithstanding, the institutions were able to overcome the difficulties and lead Niger towards the adoption of the constitution and successful legislative and presidential elections in 1993. The expansion of political space and the dynamics of democratization that occurred in Niger also opened up the possibilities for the "ethnicization" of the political process as elites struggled for control of political power.

Political Parties, Ethnicity and Democratic Transition. Following the series of demonstrations and strikes mentioned above, the government of Niger was forced to accept the principle of multiparty politics on 15 October 1990. The establishment of parties opened the floodgates to open and effective ethnic mobilization in the country. Thirty political parties participated in the National Conference. Most of them were formed in haste and did not represent any real

political force and have since faded away. Some of them however had deep roots in Niger's politics, in particular, the ethno-regional dimensions we have been discussing. The contesting parties were:

i. Mouvement National pour la Societe de Developpement (MNSD-Nassara, i.e., victory)

The MNSD was the former single party that ruled the country during the "failed transition." It was a party of notables and virtually all the top military, bureaucratic and business people in the country were members, and the Head of State, Ali Saibou was the President of the party. Saibou withdrew from the party leadership in 1991 and a congress was convened to elect a new leader. Two "military notables," who were leading power brokers under President Seyni Kountche, retired colonels Adamu Djermakoye and Tandja Mamadou contested in the March 1991 leadership congress. Djermakoye is a scion of the Zarma ruling oligarchy in Niger and had in fact tried to take over power following Kountche's death. Tandja was also a part of the top politico-military leadership of the country and had been a prefect in Maradi and Tahoua, the interior minister and the ambassador to Nigeria. However, unlike most of the rest of the top leadership, he was not Zarma. He is of mixed Kanuri and Fulani parentage from Diffa, in the south-east.

The leadership contest was won by Tandja Mamadou, mainly because the non-Zarma party cadres teamed up to support him. The election of Tandja as party leader saved the MNSD from being considered an ethnic party. He had a wide network of supporters, especially among the business community and being neither Hausa nor Zarma assured him of even wider support. He is generally considered the most "de-tribalized" politician in the country. He also had very close connections with the military leadership in Nigeria, Niger's major economic partner and was openly supported by the then ruling Babangida regime.

It was a party that assumed that it was "destined" to win the elections because it had within it the people of wealth and influence in the country, hence its party

slogan of nassara, meaning victory. Their campaign platform was the necessity to re-establish state authority, seriously compromised by the Tuareg rebellion and the "libertarian atmosphere" introduced by the National Conference. The MNSD is the most national of Niger's political parties. It not only won the most seats in the elections (29 out of 87) but also had the widest national spread, with at least two seats in all districts. Their candidate won the first round of the presidential elections and their rival, the CDS, had to form an alliance to win the second round of the elections.[46]

ii. Convention Democratique et Sociale (CDS-Rahama, i.e., bounty)

The CDS is strongly associated with the interests of the Hausa bureaucratic elite that has felt excluded from political power. Its origins have been traced to a regionalist cultural association, AMACA (Association Mutuelle pour la Culture et les Arts), established in Zinder, the center of Hausa resistance to Zarma hegemony, in 1982. AMACA metamorphasized into the CDS in 1990 with a clear intention of relying on the Hausa majority for its electoral success. The party was led by Mahamane Ousmane, the current President of Niger. The party won 22 seats in the legislative elections, 14 of them in the Hausa strongholds of Maradi and Zinder.

iii. Parti Nigerien pour la Democratie et le Socialisme (PNDS-Tarayya, i.e., togetherness)

The PNDS is a socialist party formed by a broad cross-section of the Nigerien left. Most of its cadres had been active in clandestine Marxist revolutionary groups and in the student's movement (USN) and teacher's (SNEN) union. However, many of these militants such as the party leader, Mahamadou Issoufou, had risen to the top hierarchy of civil service and public corporations and had become "embourgeoisified," at least in their material conditions of existence. The PNDS is widely acknowledged as the most ideologically

committed and non-ethnic party in Niger. The party however got 5 out of their 13 seats in Tahoua, Issoufou's region, although they got seats in all other districts, except Niamey. It was a major surprise that they were unable to get any seats in the intellectual and political center of the country. The PNDS however did not have major financial backers so their campaign was rather low key.

iv. Alliance Nigeriene pour la Democratie et le Progres (ANDP-Zaman Lahiya, i.e., peace)

The ANDP is the personal party of its leader, Moumouni Adamou Djermakoye who lost control of the MNSD to Tandja Mamadou. His objectives seemed to have been to take the Zarma vote away from the MNSD. Immediately after the MNSD Congress, he had formed CAMAD (Club des Amis de M. A. Djermakoye), "Club of Djermakoye's Friends" to help him establish a party network. He had been ambassador to the United States and was conversant with modern campaign tactics which he used effectively when CAMAD was transformed into the ANDP. His party was considered a great personal success because he stood-against the huge MNSD party machine and won 11 seats, most of them in the Zarma area. He achieved his revenge against the MNSD by denying the extra Zarma votes that would have assured them of complete victory.

v. Parti Progressiste Nigerien (PPN-RDA)

The party is an attempt to recreate the ruling party of the First Republic. It is led by Youssoufou Oumarou, an old diplomat and they won two seats in the heart of Zarmaland in Dosso and in Tilaberi. Their prize candidate, Abdullahi Diori, the son of the former President, lost his legislative bid.

vi. Union Democratique des Forces Progressistes (UDFP-Sawaba, i.e., liberty)

The party is a reincarnation of Djibo Bakary's radical nationalist's SAWABA (Liberty) party of the 1950s. The party is non-ethnic but was however stillborn because on his release from prison, Bakary compromised with the military regime and even joined the MNSD. Nigeriens seemed to feel that although he is a national hero, he had lost touch with political reality due to his long incarceration and his advanced age. The party managed to get two seats in their traditional Hausa strongholds of Maradi and Zinder, but Djibo Bakary himself did not succeed in getting elected to Parliament in his Zarma place of origin.

vii. Union des Patriots Democrates et Progressists (UPDP-Chamoua, i.e., stork)

A small Zinder party opposed to the CDS and formed under the inspiration of Professor Andre Salifou, President of the Constituent Assembly and of the HCR. It is led by Ilia Kane and has two seats in the National Assembly, one in Zinder and the other in Maradi.

viii. Parti Social Democrate Nigerien (PSDN-Alheri, i.e., grace)

A small Kanuri party. The founder, Wazir Mallam Adji died in 1992. It is now led by Kazelma Omar Taya and has one seat in Diffa.

ix. Union pour la Democratie et le Progres Social (UDPS-Amana, i.e., trust)

The UDPS got only one seat in the elections but it is potentially one of the most politically explosive parties in the country. It is the legal political wing of the Tuareg rebellion. In addition, it has one clear political demand, the establishment of federalism in Niger. The state has always had problems with the Tuaregs who refuse to recognize its boundaries. Their traditional value system, organized around the warrior traditions of heroism, bravery and honor, made it especially difficult for them to accept being subjugated. The result has been continuous

attempts by the colonial and, later, the post-colonial armies to "pacify" them and their continued resistance. During the regime of Seyni Kountche, the government even banned nomadism and decreed that all nomads would henceforth be considered ordinary animal rearers with no right to free movement.[47] Matters were not helped by the fact that the ecological zone within which the Tuaregs operated is vast, over 1,500,000 square kilometers spread over northern Niger, Chad and Mali as well as southern Libya.[48]

The relationship between the state and Tuaregs in Niger has deteriorated to open and bitter war. In May 1990, there was a major military operation against the Tuaregs in which there were speculations that over 400 were massacred.[49] The official report to the National Conference admitted that during one attack at Tchintabaraden, 19 people were summarily executed. Twenty others were tortured to death and a considerable number of Tuareg women were raped.[50] The National Conference sought an immediate solution to the problem by dismissing the army officers involved and detaining them. A section of the army revolted on 28 February 1992 and released the officers involved. In addition, pressure was put on the Prime Minister of the transition, Tcheffou Amadou, to remove his Tuareg Minister of the Interior, Mohammed Moussa, and on 23 March 1992, the whole cabinet was dissolved because of the crisis. The two Tuareg ministers and other high state officials were not only relieved of their functions but also detained. Amnesty International adopted one of these high Tuareg officials, Mortar El Inca, as one of their "Prisoners of Conscience" for 1992. He was appointed Prefect of Agadez in the earlier reconciliatory move to appoint the Tuareg elite into positions of authority so they could calm down "their people." He was however detained by the army and has been kept in the Agadez barracks, without trial.

The Tuareg insurrection is led by a number of organizations--Front de Liberation de l'Air et de l'Azawak (FLAA), Front de Liberation du Sahara and an umbrella organization, "Coordination of Armed Resistance" (CRA). The government has been negotiating with the CRA but the attempts to work out a compromise in

February 1994 failed over the issue of federalism, with the government refusing to accept a federal solution. The Tuareg uprising has been imposing serious strains on the democratization process in a complex and dangerous game played by the army, the Tuareg elite and the rest of the elite.

The 1993 General Elections. The second and decisive round of the presidential elections in Niger took place on 27 March 1993. A day later, the loser, Tandja Mamadu, visited his rival, Mahamane Ousmane to congratulate him for winning the elections and promised him a vigorous but loyal opposition in the Parliament of the country's Third Republic. The next morning the 120 foreign observers that had covered the elections declared them to have been free and fair although a few problems had been observed in the Agadez region where the Tuareg uprising was strong. The results of the elections were confirmed by the electoral commission (COSUPEL)--"Commission Nationale de Controle et de Supervision des Elections"--less than 48 hours after the end of voting. There were no complaints about rigging or electoral fraud. It was a very smooth and genuinely successful operation.

The legislative elections were conducted on the principle of proportional representation at the level of the eight departments of the country rather than on the basis of a national list. There were 618 candidates representing 12 political parties that contested for 83 seats in the elections but only nine parties were able to obtain seats. The results of the 83rd seat (Tesker) were cancelled as only 1,203 out of 8,785 voters had the possibility of voting due to serious logistical problems. New elections were organized for Tesker and the PNDS eventually won.

The major revelation of the elections was that the MNSD, the single party established by the military, was the leading party with 29 out of 83 seats. Although it did not have an absolute majority, it seemed on the way to capturing the forthcoming presidential elections.

The second party in the elections, the CDS began with the handicap of being widely considered as a Hausa party. It was, however, able to partially transcend

the ethnic label by embarking on the campaign strategy of presenting itself as the party for change and for the new generation.[51] The fact that influential Hausa businessmen and notables such as Bala dan Sani of Maradi, teamed up with the MNSD and campaigned against the CDS also helped downplay the fear of a "gang-up" of the Hausa people. On 16th February, two days after the legislative elections, the CDS spearheaded the formation of the Alliance des Forces de Changement (AFC) composed of nine parties: CDS, PNDS, ANDP, PPN/RDA, PSDN, UDPS, PRLPN, PUND and UPD.

The Alliance, therefore, had 49 of the 82 seats already declared. In addition, the participation of Djermakoye's ANDP in the Alliance assured them a substantial Zarma support while the presence of the socialist and nationalist PNDS broadened its progressive orientation. The Alliance adopted a minimum program of action aimed at promoting democracy, social justice, national unity and integration as well as a peaceful resolution of the Tuareg problem. The parties also agreed that they could all present candidates in the first round of the presidential elections but that they would all support the candidate with the highest votes during the second and decisive round. That was how Mahamane Ousmane, the leader and presidential candidate of the CDS became the candidate of the AFC on the 27 March 1993 final round of the presidential elections. Thanks to the alliance, he won the elections with 54 percent of the votes, leaving his rival, Tandja Mamadu with an impressive 46 percent. A ruling triumvirate was established with Ousmane of the CDS as President, Issoufou of the PNDS as Prime Minister and Djermakoye of the ANDP as President of the National Assembly.

Fragile Democracy

Niger has so far succeeded in its transition from an austere, ethnically based and authoritarian military regime to a civilian, democratically elected pluralist regime. Nonetheless, this success does not imply the establishment of a stable and non-

problematic form of liberal democratic politics in the country. A number of important problems remain which could destabilize the democratization process. Niger is virtually bankrupt and major aspects of economic and social life have come to a standstill due to financial difficulties. Over the past two years, the state had arrears of salary payments in the public sector. The newly elected government is unwilling and may be incapable of carrying out the massive cuts in salaries or in the size of the public work force that is being demanded by international financial institutions. At the same time, new sources of funds are hard to find. The non-payment of salaries is provoking serious social agitation as most workers in Niger are on the government wage bill. Disruptions in the educational sector have led to the cancellation of the academic year (annee blanche) in secondary schools and the primary and tertiary sectors have also been affected. There have been major student demonstrations in May 1993 and January 1994, and there are fears that the anger of the youth might disrupt the democratization process.

As noted above, the Tuareg struggle for self-determination continues straining, paradoxically, the democratization process. The army in Niger has just been removed from power at a time in which a full scale civil war is imposing a lot of strains on the military. Already, the army has mutinied a number of times on the Tuareg question and they have forcibly disrupted the rule of law by releasing army officers detained over killing Tuareg leaders, including ministers. Could the military disrupt the democratization process?

The ruling Alliance is under internal and external political strains. The ANDP has been complaining that it was not given the full number of posts it had been promised initially. Major demonstrations were organized by the opposition all over the country on 16 April 1994, 91 people were arrested for disruption of public order, including Tandja Mamadu, leader of the MNSD opposition and Andre Salifou of the UPDP. The parliamentary immunity of 33 opposition deputies has been lifted in preparation for prosecution.[52] The government seems jittery and it has refused to call local government elections.

The problems confronting Niger's democratization process are serious but not insurmountable. Niger's Third Republic has produced the first democratically elected government in the country's history. The people of Niger have suffered from dictatorship for a long time and they abhor it. More importantly, they have learned to fight against dictatorship and for democracy. They know that democracy is difficult to operate but that it is a worthwhile venture. We cannot but end with the positive note that whatever problems arise, the people of Niger will struggle to retain and advance their democratic gains.

1. Nelson Kasfir, The Shrinking Political Arena (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 227.
2. Peter Anyang-Nyong'o, "Political Instability and the Prospects for Democracy in Africa," African Development vol. 13, no. 1 (1988), p. 72.
3. Jibrin Ibrahim, "Transition of Civil Rule: Sapping Democracy," in Adebayo O. Olukoshi, ed., The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria (London: James Cuney, 1993).
4. Soulay Adji, Logiques socio-communautaires et loyautes politiques en Afrique: Essai d'analyse de la construction de l'Etat du Niger (Ph.D. Thesis, Bordeaux II, 1991), pp. 1-2.
5. Cynthia Mahrnoud, "Do Ethnic Groups Exist? A Cognitive Perspective on the Concept of Cultures," Ethnology vol. XXXI, no. 1 (1992), p. 6.
6. Benedict Anderson, imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verson, 1983), p. 15.
7. Algis Prazauskas, "Ethnic Conflicts in the Context of Democratizing Political Systems," Theory and Society no. 20 (1991), pp. 581-2.
8. See Onigu Otite, Ethnic Pluralism and Ethnicity in Nigeria 0badan: Shoneson, 1990).
9. Eghosa E. Osaghae, "Managing Ethnic Conflicts Under Democratic Transition in Africa," in Bernard Caron et. al,, eds., Democratic Transition in Africa (Ibadan: CREDU, 1992), pp. 219-20.
10. Mahaman S. Tidjani Alou, Les politiques de formation en afrique francophone: ecole, etat et societe au Niger (Ph.D. Thesis, Bordeaux, 1992), p. 332.
11. Robert B. Charlick, Niger: Personal Rule and Survival in the Sahel (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 9.
12. Some of these leaders include, Boubou Hama (1926), Hamant Diori (1933), Djibo Bakary (1938) and Seydou Djermakoye (1943).
13. This information is from Gado Alzouma who refers to the text, Maurice Abadie, Afrique centrale: la colonie du Niger (Paris: Societe d'editions geographiques, maritimes et coloniales, 1927).
14. Charlick, op. cit., p. 8.
15. Mahamane Karimou, Tradition orale el histoire: Les Mawri Zarmaphones des origines a 1898 (Niamey: IRSH, 1977), author's translation.

16. Hausa identity is not based on tribal claims to common origins. The Hausa do not even have mythologies of common origins. Becoming Hausa is purely a function of integration into the Hausa culture and language which explains the rapid way in which more and more people are becoming Hausa.
17. The translation by Benjamin H. Hardy offers Gregoire's classic work on the formation of the Hausa merchant and entrepreneurial class in Maradi to the Anglophone audience; Emmanuel Gregoire, The Alhazai of Maradi (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992).
18. Jean-Jacques Raynal, Constitutions et regimes politiques du Niger (Paris: Ministere francais de la cooperation et du developement, 1991), pp. 13-14.
19. The term evolue, short for notable was first used by colonial governor Felix Eboue in 1941 to refer to educated Africans who the French considered capable of participating in public affairs, see Tidjani Alou (1992), op. cit., p. 120.
20. A.D. Yahaya, The Native Authority System in Northern Nigeria (Zaria: A.B.U. Press, 1980), p. 26.
21. Finn Fuglestad, A History of Niger: 1850-1960 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 161.
22. Ibid., p. 172.
23. Ibid., p. 181.
24. Ibid., pp. 186-7.
25. Adji, op. cit., p. 278.
26. Raynal, 1991, op. cit., p. 16.
27. Adji, op. cit., p. 234.
28. Ibid., p. 296.
29. Fuglestad, op. cit., p. 187.
30. For details, see my article "From Political Exclusion to Popular Participation: Democratic Transition in Niger Republic," in Bernard Caron et. al., eds., op. cit.
31. Adji, op. cit., p. 279.
32. Raynal, 1991, op. cit., p. 18, author's translation.
33. Adji, op. cit., p. 280.
34. Ibid., pp. 343-8.
35. The samariyya is a Hausa term which refers to neighborhood youth community self-help groups which were to be the basic unit for the construction of participatory grassroots democracy.
36. See Jean-Jacques Raynal, "La Deuxieme Republique du Niger: une democratie bien ordonnee," Penant: Revue du droit des pays d'Afrique no. 804 (October 1990), pp. 379-81.
37. Ali Saibou, Discours et Messages (Niamey: Agence Nigerienne de Press, 1988), p. 99.
38. Ibid., pp. 65, 71.
39. Aboubacar Maidoka, "La Constitution nigerienne du 24 septembre 1989," Revue Juridique Africaine no. 1 (1991).
40. Raynal, 1990, op. cit., p. 382.
41. Adji, op. cit., p. 329.
42. Abdoulaye Niandou-Souley, "Le Niger apres Seyni Kountche," in Annie africaine 1989 (Bordeaux: Pedone, 1990), p. 249.

43. Ibid., p. 268.
44. Adji, op. cit., p. 333.
45. Ibid., p. 337.
46. The capacity of the MNSD to transform itself from an authoritarian party to an effective player in the democratic game is remarkable.
47. Adji, op. cit., p. 282.
48. Catherine Baroin, Anarchie et cohesion sociale chez les Toubou (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.17.
49. Marches tropicaux, 22 June 1990.
50. Haske, 16 September 1991.
51. The idea of change, canji in Hausa, is an overflow from Northern Nigeria where the People's Redemption Party campaign for social redemption during the second Nigerian Republic became a powerful mobilization platform for progressives
52. West Africa, no. 3998 (16 May 1994), p. 878.
53. February 1993 Legislative Elections in Niger

PARTY	SLOGAN	SEATS
MNSD	Nassara (Victory)	29
CDS	Rahama (Bounty)	22
PNDS	Tarayya (Togetherness)	13
ANDP	Zaman Lahya (Peace)	11
PPN/RDA		2
UDFP	Sawaba (Liberty)	2
UPDP	Chamoua (Stork)	2
PSDN	Alheri (Grace)	1
UPDS	Amana (Trust)	1

~~~~~~~~

By Jibrin Ibrahim

Jibrin Ibrahim is a professor in the Department of Political Science at Ahmadu Bello University, P.O. Box 534, Samaru, Zaria, Nigeria. The author is grateful to Soulay Adji, Niamdou-Soulay, Tidjani Alou, and Gado Alzouma, for the insights they offered.

Source: Africa Today, 1994 3rd Quarter, Vol. 41 Issue 3, p15, 25p
Item: 9501251781
~~~~~~~~